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Batwoman Vol. 1: Hydrology (The New 52)



Synopsis

A NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLERAs a part of the acclaimed DC Comics™ The New 52 event of September 2011, Batwoman's new series finally begins! The creative team of J.H. Williams III and W. Haden Blackman launch the ongoing Batwoman series, as Batwoman (a.k.a. Kate Kane) faces deadly new challenges in her war against Gotham City's underworld and new trials in her personal life. Who or what is stealing children from the barrio, and for what vile purpose? Will Kate train her cousin, Bette Kane (a.k.a. Flamebird), as her new sidekick? How will she handle unsettling revelations about her father, Colonel Jacob Kane? And why is a certain government agency suddenly taking an interest in her? These are some of the questions that will be answered in this long-awaited series! This deluxe hardcover collect issues 0-5 of Batwoman, part of the DC Comics™ The New 52 event. From the Hardcover edition.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"Truly a work of art." — USA Today
"The most satisfying read of the new DC 52." — The New York Times
"Visually stunning." — Entertainment Weekly
"Absolutely enjoyable. . . Batwoman has the bragging rights of the best all around artistic team on any of DC's New 52. From Williams to Dave Stewart on colors and Todd Klein on letters, these guys are as pro as it gets and it shows. Batwoman...is a tour de force of superheroics, mystery, and sheer artistic glory" — IGN, 9.0 rating
"Put away your

misconceptions about female heroines and pick up this book. [Complex Magazine](#) [“Make no mistake about it, the plots handled by Blackman and Williams are fantastic, but it’s Williams’ art that’s the real highlight here|these pages could be hung up in a museum.](#) [Complex Magazine](#) [“Gorgeous, stylized and unique|the story’s pretty much non-stop.](#) [Publishers Weekly](#) [“The bottom line: it is an excellent book.](#) [PopMatters](#) [“There is action, detective work, personal conflict born of both romance and animosity, and internal discord rooted in hubris, innocence, and wrath. In short, this series has the makings of an all-time classic.](#) [IGN](#) [“J.H. Williams’ art is still just as stunning as it ever was. Highly recommend for Bat-fans.](#) [Ain’t It Cool News](#) [“The kind of evocative writing that could open a great horror movie or novel. And the art is painterly and gorgeous.](#) [Time Out Chicago](#) [“This is graphic storytelling unlike any other book on the stands right now|every new page is another rousing success. Seriously rousing: I want to cheer when I read this book, it’s so good.](#) [The Onion AV Club](#) [“It’s an astounding usage of the comics medium.](#) [Comic Book Resources](#) [“Williams and co-writer W. Haden Blackman show exactly how one relauches a title for new and old readers|Simply put, BATWOMAN is the superhero comic, perfected.](#) [Newsarama](#)

J.H. Williams entered the comics field in 1991 and immediately began getting attention for his finely crafted work on such titles as Batman, Starman and Seven Soldiers of Victory. William’s went on to co-create and pencil the hit series Promethea with comics legend Alan Moore. His recent works include Batman: The Black Glove with Grant Morrison and Batman: Detective with Paul Dini.

This volume collects issues 0-5 and to clear up any confusion, due to different solicits, is NOT a deluxe hardcover but a standard hardcover. Sadly, Batwoman issue 0 is a hold over from the old DCU. The dead give away is Batman’s emblem, the yellow background with bat on top that Grant Morrison made the trademark for old DCU Batman Inc. It is Batman/Bruce Wayne scouting Batwoman/Kate Kane to figure out if the identity matches and if she is worthy to be one of Gotham’s protectors. Almost a precursor to Greg Rucka’s written and J. H. Williams drawn *Batwoman: Elegy*. A fanatic read and highly recommended before going into this story. Issues 1-5 is the Hydrology arc and the intro of Batwoman into the new 52, but it picks up right where the above mentioned "Elegy" storyline finished. New readers do not fear, as all needed information is given.

This is still a relatively new franchise. Kate is still at ends with her father and the tragedy that befell her sister. But a crimefighter has little time to rest in Gotham City as a watery ghost called "The Weeping Woman" is drowning children and leaving the authorities clueless. Kate also has her over eager yet not psychology ready cousin, Bette Kane, a.k.a. Flamebird, itching to go as her sidekick. Kate also has romance woes with Detective Maggie Sawyer of the G.C.P.D. And has gotten the interest of a supernatural division of the D.E.O. from an Agent Chase and Director Bones (it's a fitting name). Let me talk about the art first as it's just too exciting. J. H. Williams III works magic on the page. His stylish and intricate layouts. His gorgeous styles. He draws a more mundane Kate Kane and then a vampiric Batwoman that haunts the criminals she engages. Also, a lot of credit to one of the best colorists in the business, Dave Stewart. Batwoman's reds are burning, her blacks deep as night, and the whiteness of her face is the palest of pales. Amy Reeder, who does the Kate sequences in issue 0 is pretty good. But when Williams is the featured artist, everyone else sharing the page looks inferior. The story is gripping and intense. It gets away from the main focus of "The Weeping Woman" a bit too often as it juggles multiple plot threads, but this is not a frustration as each thread is entertaining and deserving of it's given time. Kate Kane lives her life. It's one of the appeals of this character. She is not too wrapped up in "the mission" to sacrifice her personal life but when she is Batwoman she is all business. She also is still relatively new to this, so there are those learning bumps that would be fatal for a lesser vigilante, but due to her military background and who she is and what she has dealt with she manages to overcome. You love to root for her. I have no idea how much of the writing Williams does but it is a relief that a top tier illustrator knows their strength is in the art and willingly accepts the aid of a career writer. W. Haden Blackman is there to keep him honest and to tell a coherent story. That ideal was finally realized on "Batman: The Dark Knight", but sadly is still not accepted over at "Detective Comics". (I love Tony Daniels' art but the man cannot write!) One of the main appeals of this series is although it's a Bat title, Batwoman operates on her own. Yes, she was inspired by Batman and realizes it's his turf but in this series they do not team up and she does not take orders from him. She wears his sign out of respect, respects the local P.D., does not kill, and has meets to chat but is not one of his agents. I loved the fact that when Scott Snyder was revving up to do the Night of the Owls crossover and asked all the other titles creative teams to join, Williams and Blackman said, "Thanks, but no thanks. We have our own side of Gotham to explore". That trickles down into this character as well. Great story. Great character. GREAT ART. Great series. Cannot wait to soldier on to the next volume.

I went into this not knowing much about Batwoman...and I still don't. Most New 52 TPB volumes

cover as much plot in about 2-3 issues. This focuses so little on the plot that I didn't care about the villain (who was clearly intended to be sympathetic) or the side character that almost died...or really anyone. It focuses on too many perspectives so none of them have any real depth. On top of that I thought the art was ugly and inconsistent. Also some layouts were messy and confusing with how the panels were set up and I couldn't make out the title of the issues either. This is the only New 52 title that I've rated this low, so I'm not an over critical comic snob or anything.

I guess I'm doing a disservice to J.H. Williams III's writing and W. Haden Blackman's writing, but I've this urge to rush thru the plotline summary so that I can proceed to obsess over what's really got me stoked about this series. Thankfully, here's Katherine Kane in DC's New 52 relaunch. **BATWOMAN Vol. 1: HYDROLOGY** collects issues #0-5. Unlike most (or any other?) rebooted series in the New 52, **BATWOMAN** picks up from the continuity of Kate Kane's tragic pre-Flashpoint existence (see *Batwoman: Elegy*). As things stand, as this new series opens, Kate Kane has had a parting of ways with her father, Colonel Jacob Kane, him what's been her invaluable weapon/tech support and personal trainer and all-around mentor. Kate not only holds her father responsible for her maniacal twin sister's recent death, she's also pretty cheesed at him for having kept her sister's being alive a secret for all these years. In her father's absence the Batwoman has recruited her cousin, Bette Kane (a.k.a. Flamebird), as her field sidekick. Kate will need all the help she can get as she investigates the serial abduction and murder of Gotham's children. Frightened whispers in the community point her towards the disturbing urban myth of La Llorona, "The Weeping Woman," a tormented ghostly figure that quenches her deep misery by ruining the lives of others, namely by stealing and drowning their innocent children. A quick segue: The legend of La Llorona: supposedly a neglectful woman who allowed her children to drown, after which she killed herself, after which she came back as a vengeful spirit. W. Haden Blackman and J.H. Williams III write an absorbing tale, maintain that hardboiled, noirish edge. Sure, I miss the heck out of Greg Rucka's storytelling. But Blackman and Williams III keep a fascinating pulse on Batwoman. Kate Kane's wrenching personal baggage still consumes her, still very much drives her actions. And, uh oh, here's the Batman with an offer she... can't... refuse? While the writing is, of course, invaluable, comic books is still predominantly a visually-oriented medium. I don't know how long these following folks have actually been in the four color biz, but, to me, they're a relatively fresh-faced crop of superstar artists whose work I'm now trying to track down. Folks like Fiona Staples, Sara Pichelli, and Phil Noto (who I think has been around for a bit now). But as good as them other folks are (and they're very, very good), J.H. Williams III steals all thunder. No other current artist gets me more psyched than

Williams III. He's today's Jim Steranko. I love the explosion of creativity and flow that he brings, and the sheer dynamism. He enchances mood and atmosphere thru the application of innovative panel compositions. I dig how he gets all Will Eisnery in how he incorporates elements such as chapter titles into the visual narrative. J.H. Williams III and static storytelling are, like, mortal enemies. I'm a big fan of the guy. And so are you.

The first Volume of Batwoman has a number of things going for it. First, the artwork, done by the great J.H. Williams III, the artist behind Promethea and Sandman Overture. Williams makes great use of full page splash panels, framing motifs, and merging the background into the foreground to create a visually stunning comic. The plotting is also very well done, merging the criminal and mystical elements of the DC universe to create something both fun and frightening. The characters are where this becomes a mixed bag. Kate Kane and the rest of her squad are fine characters, but a few elements of her backstory felt very rushed if you're like me and didn't know much about the character prior to reading. The dialogue didn't help, which lost the snap I've come to expect from comics.

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